



ROBERT ERNEST HUME

20 March, 1877 – 4 January, 1949

Biographical Notes

CONTENTS

www.archive.org	3
Alumni Catalogue of the Union Theological Seminary - City of New York, 1836-1936	4
New York Times – January 5, 1948 – ‘ <i>Dr. Hume, Expert on Religions, Dies</i> ’	5

Robert Ernest Hume (20 March, 1877 – 4 January, 1949) was an expert on religions. Dr. Hume wrote three books: 1) *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* in which is a most accurate and in-depth work on translating them from the Sanskrit, 2) *The World's Living Religions* in 1924 which received great acclaim and was the only book besides the Bible to be placed in the time capsule at the 1939 New York's World Fair and appeared in its 29th edition in 1944, and 3) *The Treasure House of the Living Religions* in 1932, a real masterpiece.

**Alumni Catalogue of the Union Theological Seminary
City of New York, 1836-1936**

Robert Ernest Hume was born Ahmednagar, India, Mar. 20, 1877; Yale University, 1898; ditto, 1900, M.A.; ditto, 1901, Ph.D.; Union Theological Seminary, 1901-02, 1903-04, B.D.; ordained (Congregational, New Haven Association), May 23, 1905; missionary (teacher, Theological Seminary), Ahmednagar, India, 1907-10; editor, weekly "Dnyanodaya", Bombay, India, 1910-14; Marcellus Hartley professor (Philosophy and History of Religion, and Missions), Union Theological Seminary, 1914-18; Charles Butler professor (History of Religions), ditto, 1918-----; delegate to universities in India from Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, educational division, lecturer, University of Bombay and University of the Punjab, 1923. Ph.D., Yale University, 1901; D.Theol., University of Strasbourg, 1932.

Hume died in New York in 1948.

NEW YORK TIMES – January 5, 1948 –

DR. HUME, EXPERT ON RELIGIONS, DIES
Professor Emeritus at Union Seminary,
Once Missionary, Wrote Several Books

The Rev. Dr. Robert Ernest Hume, an outstanding authority on the living religions of the world, died yesterday in his home at 405 West 118th Street, after an illness of several months. He was 70 years old.

Dr. Hume was a Professor emeritus of the History of Religions at Union Theological Seminary, a former missionary in India and a Congregational minister.

Born in Ahmednagar, Bombay Presidency, India, on March 20, 1877, he was a member of a family whose immediate members had been missionaries in India since 1839 and was a son of two missionaries, the late Dr. Robert Allen Hume and the late Mrs. Abbie Lyon Burgess Hume.

He received a B.A. degree from Yale in 1898, an M.A. from Yale in 1900 and a Ph.D. from his alma mater in 1901. Later he studied at the University of Goettingen. Union Seminary bestowed a B.D. summa cum laude upon him in 1904. He had interrupted his studies at Union to tour the world for a year as secretary to the seminary's president, the late Dr. C.C. Hall, who lectured at various universities.

Was Ordained in 1905

In 1905 Dr. Hume was ordained a minister in the Congregational Church. Two years later he went to India as a missionary under the America Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission. From 1907 until 1909 he was on the faculty of the Ahmednagar Theological Seminary, and in the next five years he was located in Bombay City as editor of a Christian bilingual weekly, Dnyanodaya (Rise of Knowledge).

In India also he taught at Wilson College, Bombay; organized the Western India Missionary Association and helped to organize the Social Service League of Bombay.

Dr. Hume came to new York in 1914 as Professor of the history of Religions at Union. He retired in 1943.

In 1921 appeared "The Thirteen Principal Upanishads", which comprised the translation from Sanskrit of speculative religions-philosophical Hindu treatises together with an outline of their philosophy.

His best known book, "The World's Living Religions", was published in 1924, receiving critical acclaim. It was the only religious book besides the Bible placed in the time capsule at the 1939 New York World's Fair, and appeared in its twenty-ninth edition in 1944. His book, "The Treasure House of the Living Religions", was published in 1932.

Lectured at Many Universities

Dr. Hume contributed articles to The Yale Review, American Journal of Theology, Columbia University Review of Religion, Indian Philosophical Review, International Review of Mission, Adult Bible-Class Magazine, The Presbyterian Tribune, The Christian Herald, Missionary Review of the World, Religion and Life, The Saturday Review of Literature and other journals.

He taught at Columbia University summer sessions and served at Columbia as adviser to the department of religion. Dr. Hume gave a course of lectures on early Indian history at Bombay University and had lectured at the University of the Punjab; Hindu University, Benares; Moslem University; the College of the Maharajah of Baroda, and the India Institute of Oxford University. At Oxford also he spoke in 1937 at the World's Congress of Faiths. The next year he was chairman of a session of that congress.

A former president of the American Theological Society, he was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Oriental Society. In 1932 the University of Strasbourg presented to Dr. Hume an honorary doctorate in recognition of his translation of philosophical and theological documents.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Laura Caswell Hume; two sons, Dr. Robert Caswell Hume of New York and Edward Putnam Hume of Mayaguez, P.R.; a daughter, Mrs. James P. McCormick of Detroit; three brothers, Dr. Wilson H. Hume of Lahore, India; Dr. Walter F. Hume of Wai, India, and Henry W. Hume of Hong Kong, and two sisters, Mrs. Hannah L. Calder of Boston and Mrs. John M. Maguire of Cambridge, Mass.

A memorial service will be held at 5 P.M. tomorrow in the James Chapel of Union Theological Seminary, Claremont Avenue and 121st Street.